pool under the Tea Board to sustain its domestic retail outlet operations and bulk supplies and allot authorised vends to economically weaker sections of the society?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir. As per the estimates of Tea Board, domestic consumption of tea is steadily increasing. Therefore, no special measures are envisaged to promote consumption of tea within the country;

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of reply to (a) and (b).

Employees in FCI Units

1918. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the number of workers employed in different FCI godowns all over the country on temporary basis;

(b) whether Government propose to regularise their services;

(c) if so, the norms prescribed for the purpose; and

(d) the steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) The number of workers/labour engaged in the FCI for handling foodgrains varies from day to day depending on the volume of work involved. Besides that, the Corporation has no control over the number of workers/ labourers engaged through mate/workers management committee, Cooperative Society and Contract systems. Exact number of workers/labourers engaged is, therefore, not available.

(b) to (d) It has dedided to refer the matter to Central Advisory Contract Labour Board for appointment of a Committee by the Ministry of Labour to go into the question of workload for abolition of contract labour in FCI depots on the whole and recommend norms for the same.

Decontrol of prices and Distribution of Coal

1919. SHRI JOYANTA ROY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is going to dilute its control on prices and distribution of coal in respect of the emerging market scenario;

(b) if so, what is the role of coal linkage committee; and

(c) how many committees are working under the Ministry of Coal for allocation of coal to the bulk consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Based on the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Energy of the Parliament contained in its 25th Report dated 18.5.1995, the Ministry of Coal has set up a Committee to review the existing system of linkages and consider its relevance and the need for its continuance in the emerging market economy. The role of coal linkage committees will be examined in the light of the report of the committee.

With regard to dilution of control on prices a recommendation from the BICP to this effect is under examination.

(c) The following linkage Committees are working in the Ministry of Coal to consider coal linkages to bulk consumers;

(i) Standing Linkage Committee (Long-term) for Power and Cement sectors.

(ii) Standing Linkage Committee (Short-term) for Power sector.

(iii) Standing Linkage Committee (Short-term) for Cement sector.

Elimination of Child Labour

1920. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether any meeting of National Authority for Elimination of Child Labour was hold recently in New Delhi to eleminate child labour in hazardous industries by the year 2000; whether any blue print drawn up for this purpose;

(b) whether special cells have been created in all the States;

(c) whether the above authority received any concrete proposals from State Governments for "Specific Projects" to eliminate child labour; if so, what action Government have taken so far; and